

median suture on the thorax, and for a peculiar venation of the wings.

The family Hippoboscidæ is represented in England by six genera, and it is impossible to place this insect in any one of them. I therefore propose, till a fitting genus has been found for it, provisionally to call it *Hippobosca tasmanica*. I here give a figure of the insect seen dorsally and showing the venation of the wings.

The species may be briefly characterized as follows:—

Hippobosca tasmanica, sp. n., ♂ or ♀.

Head broad and flat. Viewed laterally it has a rather pointed crown. No hair on eyes. Antennæ sunk in cavities; a few short hairs on them, but no arista. Proboscis of usual *Hippobosca* type, with pronounced palpi. A long bristle on each side of the mouth, pointing downwards like a tusk.

Thorax leathery, light brown; has a spined tubercle on each shoulder. Suture very marked—a median suture on the anterior portion of the thorax; starting from the posterior side of the transverse suture, it bisects it at right angles. No tegulæ (?). Halteres appear to have lost their knobs, but owing to the condition of specimens nothing certain can be said on these two points.

Abdomen darker in colour than thorax, short and stout.

Wings very long, with characteristic venation.

Legs. Hind pair long and fringed with fine long pubescence; apical setæ on tibiæ. Middle legs shorter, tarsi reduced in size. Fore legs with stout femora.

No characters to distinguish sex made out.

Length of body 5 millim., or to extremity of wing 8 millim.

Hab. Tasmania; parasitic on the wallaby (*Macropus ruficollis*).

LIV.—*The Musk-Rat of the Antilles* (*Mus pilorides*) as *Type of a very distinct Genus* (*Megalomys*, *Trt.*) under the new Generic Name *Moschomys*. By Dr. E. L. TROUËSSART, C. M. Zool. Soc. of Lond. (in Paris).

I.—WHEN in 1881* I created the genus *Megalomys* for the “Rat musqué (Pilor)” of Rochefort (*Mus pilorides*, Desmarest, 1826) I regarded this type simply as a subgenus of

* ‘Le Naturaliste,’ no. 45, p. 5 (1881); Ann. Sc. Nat., Zool. xix. 1885, article 5, p. 13, pl. i.

Hesperomys, because the subdivisions of this great group of American rats were at that time considered by naturalists merely as subgenera.

Now the subgenera *Rhipidomys*, *Oryzomys*, *Calomys*, *Onychomys*, &c. are looked upon as true genera, and several of them are already subdivided. *Megalomys* having the same importance, it seems right to raise it also to the rank of a genus.

Yet in 1897, when writing the 'Catalogus Mammalium' (Pars III. Rodentia), I allowed myself to be influenced by a prior suggestion of Mr. O. Thomas*, and in contradiction to the opinion for which I contended, with some reason, in my work of 1881 and 1885, based on the original specimens of Plée (from Martinique) in the Museum of Paris, I referred, too hastily, *Megalomys* to the genus *Holochilus*, Brandt, as a simple subgenus. Indeed, *Megalomys pilorides* and *Holochilus vulpinus* are alike only as regards their large size.

More recently, Dr. C. I. Forsyth Major, in a short preliminary note †, and without giving the reasons for this identification, connects *Megalomys* with the genus *Oryzomys*, another subdivision of the old genus *Hesperomys*.

On this occasion I fear my learned friend, Dr. Forsyth Major—who is, first of all, a paleontologist, that is to say, an anatomist,—let himself be influenced by the cranial features of *Mus pilorides*, which are, in my opinion, common to all the large species of Muridæ, and disregarded the important zoological characters which clearly distinguish *Megalomys* from *Oryzomys*.

In reality *Megalomys pilorides* and *Oryzomys palustris* (the type of the last genus) are much more distinct than, for example, *Erotomys glareolus* and *Arvicola amphibius*. One is exclusively terrestrial, the other aquatic, and the characters of both are perfectly in accordance with their habits. This will be seen from the following table, in which I quote the words employed by Baird ‡ in his description of *Oryzomys palustris*, or, more correctly, those used by Elliott Coues §, to distinguish this type species:—

* "On a Collection of Muridæ from Central Peru" (Proc. Zool. Soc. Lond. 1884, pp. 447 *et seq.*).

† "The Musk-Rat of Santa Lucia" (Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist. ser. 7, vii. 1901, pp. 204-206).

‡ 'Mammals of North America,' 1857, pp. 458 & 482-483. It should be noticed that the characters of the subgenus *Oryzomys* (p. 458) are incomplete, as only those are mentioned in which it differs from *Hesperomys*, properly so-called, and from *Onychomys*.

§ 'Monograph of the Rodentia of North America,' Muridæ, 1877, pp. 111-113.

Megalomys pilorides.

Terrestrial.

a. Ears entirely naked both sides, largely overtopping the fur, without tuft of hairs on the concavity.

b. Hind feet very long, but compressed, with parallel short and stout toes.

c. No trace of web at the base of the toes.

Oryzomys palustris.

Amphibious.

a. Ears hirsute both sides, small, little overtopping the fur, with a fluffy tuft of hairs on the concavity.

b. Hind feet very long and large (as in *Fiber*), with obliquely set long and slender toes.

c. A slight but evident web at the base of all the toes.

These three characters are quite sufficient to necessitate the separation of the two genera. That being granted, I shall willingly acknowledge that very likely *Megalomys* represents the terrestrial type of *Oryzomys*. As regards the superciliary crests of the skull, the anteorbital foramen, and even the structure of the teeth, I shall prove elsewhere that they have nothing peculiar to permit of uniting the two genera, but are characters of all the largest Muridæ or of many of the American Cricetinæ.

The genus *Megalomys* includes at the present time three species:—(1) *Mus pilorides*, the type of the genus; (2) *Oryzomys lucia*, Major (*loc. cit.*); and (3) the fossil species (of Barbuda) referred to, but not described, by Dr. Forsyth Major in the above-mentioned note.

II.—There remains still to elucidate a double question of nomenclature—(1) The genus of which *Mus pilorides* is the type might retain the name *Megalomys*; (2) the species must be called "*pilorides*, Desmarest, 1826," as I have admitted, or be known by the name of "*piloris*, Zimmermann, 1777," as Dr. Forsyth Major wishes, or else, again, as Mr. J. A. Allen * suggests.

First, it must be remembered that Laurillard, in 1848, created under the name "*Megamys*" a genus of fossil Rodentia which includes the largest mammals of this order at present known. Now, this name of *Megamys* is wrong as an abbreviation of "*Megalomys*," the only name correctly formed.

In agreement with the rules of nomenclature prescribed by the International Zoological Congresses, "*Megamys*" ought to be rectified into "*Megalomys*," and, consequently, *Megalomys* (Trouessart, 1881), given to *Mus pilorides*, is not available, as preoccupied, and must be altered.

Accordingly I propose to substitute for *Megalomys* (Trt.,

* Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist. xvi. 1902, pp. 13, 20.

1881, nec Laurillard, 1848) the new name of *MOSCHOMYS* (Musk-Rat).

As for the specific name of the type of this genus, the question is more complicated. The name "*pilorides*" (Pallas, 1778) ought to be dropped, Pallas* having under this name included two very distinct species. One is the *Mus albus ceylonicus*, Brisson (Quadr. Epitome, p. 122, sp. 8), given as being from Ceylon (!), the description of which indicates that it is really the type of *Mus pilorides*, and in nowise agrees with the second species, the musk-rat of the Antilles, the fur of which is black on the back.

The name "*piloris*," proposed by Dr. Forsyth Major is also untenable, Zimmermann having only used it in imitation of Buffon as a vernacular name. Indeed, in the 'Geographische Geschichte' (ii. p. 360) he refers the "Rat musqué" of Rochefort to *Mus pilorides*, Pallas, whose synonymy he copies entirely. The name "*Castor pilorides*" was bestowed by Pallas, who latinized, in 1778, the vulgar name given by Zimmermann in 1777.

The name "*Cavia moschata*," latinized also by Pallas from the "Musk-Cavy" of Pennant, is synonymous with "*pilorides*, Pallas," and for the same reasons must be rejected.

Finally, there remains the name "*Desmaresti*," created in 1829 by Fischer † for the *Mus pilorides*, Desmarest (nec Pallas), which is incontestably the "Rat musqué de la Martinique" of Rochefort ‡; and this name is applicable to the species under consideration, as already proposed by Mr. J. A. Allen (*loc. cit.* 1902).

The genus *Moschomys* will thus include the following three species:—

1. *Moschomys Desmaresti*, Fischer, 1829 (La Martinique).
2. — *luciae*, Major, 1902 (Santa Lucia).
3. — *nova species* (fossil), Major (Barbuda).

* 'Novæ Species ordine Glirium,' 1778, p. 91. Likewise the identification of *Mus pilorides*, Pallas (= *Mus albus ceylonicus*, Brisson), with the *Capromys* from Cuba is very doubtful, and practically not allowable. Consequently the name "*Capromys Fournieri*, Desmarest, 1882," is preferably to be applied to this species, and "*pilorides*" must be entirely cancelled as a systematic name and rejected from the synonymy.

† 'Synopsis Mammalium,' 1829, p. 316 (= *Mus pilorides*, Desmar., Dict. Sc. Nat. t. xlv. (1826) p. 483)—not 'Nouv. Dict.,' as Fischer says by mistake.

‡ Fischer says "In insula Martinica, *D. Plée*."